Academic Engagement Policy 24-25

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Approved by	Academic DVC
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This Policy and Procedure is available in accessible formats on request from the Student Engagement Team. Please contact: attendance@lsbu.ac.uk

Contents

Academic Attendance and Engagement Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1. London South Bank University ("LSBU") is committed to ensuring that students achieve the most out of their time at the institution, helping them to succeed. To support this, the institution recognises that attendance and engagement is the key to academic success.

1.2. To ensure this success, the expectation is that students attend all compulsory events (teaching and non-teaching).

1.3. Engagement with curricular and cocurricular events are an important part of the student experience and support successful outcomes. We encourage students to make the most of these opportunities that are available, including appointments with Personal Tutors, Course Leaders and Module Leaders.

1.4. To help facilitate the process of engagement and attendance, the University uses an online platform to monitor attendance. Students will use a mobile app to register attendance and see a visualisation of their own attendance and engagement data.

1.5. The primary aim of this policy is to support student's engagement with their academic programme helping to detect any possible barriers, providing early support to overcome these and thereby increasing their chances of academic success.

2. Why is attendance and engagement important?

2.1 Students are active participants in the LSBU learning community. It is therefore important that they take responsibility for achieving their academic potential through attending and participating at teaching events, engaging with learning materials, and seeking further help, support, and advice when they require it. Learning is a shared experience, and attendance is critical to ensuring success.

2.2 Courses are designed to support and aid the student's learning to be successful in their chosen field, helping them to gain and develop knowledge and skills for employment of career progression.

2.3 Frequent non-attendance means that student do not fully benefit from the LSBU learning experience and is consistent with lower module marks which can lead to lower degree classification or awards.

2.4 Students who engage with all aspects of study benefit most from their course.

2.5 Not only can non-attendance and engagement impact your studies, but it could also have an impact on the learning of others, particularly when you have any time of group work or assessments.

3. Scope – who is covered by this procedure?

3.1. This policy applies to:

3.1.1. Any undergraduate and postgraduate student during all taught elements of any course within LSBU.

3.1.2. Any student currently on a higher or degree apprenticeship at any level (levels 4, 5, 6 and 7)

3.1.3. While studying at OnCampus in the integrated Foundation or International Year One, students will be monitored by OnCampus and subject to their engagement policy. Information about attendance will be shared with LSBU and LSBU will be responsible for reporting students who are withdrawn for low engagement to UKVI. Please see appendix 2 for the CEG Attendance and Engagement Policy

4. Who is responsible for this policy?

4.1. DVC Academic Framework has the overall responsibility for this policy but has delegated the responsibility for its day-to-day operation and implementation to the Academic Registrar or their nominee.

4.2. Day-to-day implementation and oversight of the policy and process for students on taught programmes sits with the Head of Student Administration or their nominee.

4.3. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and at least every two years by the Academic Registrar or their nominee and the DVC Academic Framework (or nominee) to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose.

5. How will it work?

5.1. The attendance app should be downloaded from the app store/play store by searching "MyLSBU". Alternatively, students can use the following link to find further information and a link.
https://my.lsbu.ac.uk/campusm/home#menu

5.2. Students can find further information, including helpful videos and how to guides on the "Attendance" page on myLSBU (https://my.lsbu.ac.uk/)

5.3. All timetabled events will be on "My Account" and clearly identifiable as "in person" or "online".

5.3.1. Changes to timetabled events will be kept to a minimum and only changed or cancelled in exceptional circumstances. Where there is a cancelled event, there will always been an attempt to reschedule this.

5.3.2. Where the change to the class is in relation to the mode of delivery (face to face to online and vice versa) this will be clearly communicated in advance to students and academic staff will follow a procedure with the central Timetabling Team to ensure that this is reflected in your timetable.

5.4. Attendance for new students (undergraduate and postgraduate taught) will start from Induction week (at all entry points during the academic year). Compulsory events during this week will be clearly communicated to all students.

5.5. Attendance for returning students (undergraduate and postgraduate taught) will start from the first day of semester one, at all entry points during the academic year.

5.6. Attendance monitoring will stop on the last day of teaching in Semester 2, unless you are on a course with non-standard delivery (please see section 7-10 below for further details)

5.7. Timetabled events are defined as scheduled lectures, seminars, workshops, tutorials, supervised field trips, laboratory sessions and examinations, personal tutor appointments, revision workshops. Only attendance for compulsory sessions will be included in the attendance score, however attendance at optional and co-curricular events will be considered when looking at the overall engagement picture for a student.

5.8. Students will be sent reminders via "My Account" for upcoming classes, detailing the start times and location of the timetabled session.

5.9. Students will be able to "check in" via "My Account" for their timetabled event no more than 5 minutes in advance the start time of their event, as long as they are at the right classroom locations, and up to 20 minutes after the start of the session.

5.9.1. Any students arriving after the cut off period as detailed in Section 4.6 will be considered late and therefore this attendance will be recorded as "unvalidated) and counted as an absence. If they have a valid reason, this can be discussed with the academic member of staff leading that teaching event and a decision will be made as to whether the record can be amended. Please note that this will be at the discretion of the academic and their decision will be final.

5.10. Students are expected to attend Semester 2 timetabled events even if they are waiting for Semester 1 results for resit exams and/or the Semester 1 resit coursework.

5.10.1. Please refer to our Tuition Fee Regulations or contact the fees@lsbu.ac.uk for guidance

5.11 Students who are repeating modules in attendance will be expected to attend all

timetabled classes, even if students have passed certain assessments on that module. This is to ensure that they make the most of the opportunities to consolidate their knowledge.

6. What do students need to do?

6.1. New and returning students will be required to download the app onto their device to access the attendance monitoring app. Without downloading the app students cannot recorded their attendance.

6.1.1. If a student does not own a smart phone or their phone is temporarily unavailable, please contact the lecturer to advise them of this (at the end of the class). In these exceptional circumstances the lecturer will be able to manually "log" the student into the attendance system after the scheduled timetabled event.

6.2. Attend all orientation and induction activity organised by LSBU or their School as these are compulsory and will enable you to get a better understanding of important aspects of the University and your course.

6.3. Students are expected to attend all timetabled (and rescheduled) learning events, and/or other compulsory events either online or in person. Details of the method of delivery (online/in person) will be outlined on the timetable.

6.4. Attend classes at the times there are scheduled for on their timetable. Some classes might not allow late entry (as they might have missed vital health and safety talks). Where late entry is allowed, please ensure that you enter the room quietly without disturbing others, the lecturers may only allow this at certain points to minimise disruption.

6.5. Be aware that if their attendance reduces that is likely to trigger a set of interventions to identify any additional support requirements and students will be expected to meaningfully engage with staff that reach out offering support,

6.5.1. Any (approved) authorised absence requests will also be considered when reviewing if students have met the trigger points and if there is a need to instigate any interventions.

6.6. Ensure they use their LSBU email address and respond to any queries from the Student Engagement Team and/or UKVI team relating to attendance and engagement.

6.7. To ensure they keep the University informed of any sickness or absence from classes, recording this absence on the day that they are unable to attend classes. Please read this policy and the procedure document carefully to avoid being withdrawn or excluded for non-engagement. In some instances, students might be referred to and considered under the Support and Fitness to Study Procedure.

(https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/326618/fitness-to-study.pdf)

LSBU expects students to make every effort to catch up should they miss classes due to illness or other reasons. Student can reach out to their module leaders, course leaders and/or personal tutors for additional academic support. Students can also reach out to the Skills for Success Team (https://library.lsbu.ac.uk/skillsforsuccess.) for additional study support.

6.8.   Access the frequently asked questions (FAQ's) which are available to students via MyLSBU. (https://myaccount.lsbu.ac.uk/s/global-search/attendance)

6.9.   Students will be able to view their own attendance via the app, to help them keep track of their progress.

7   Additional expectations for students on placements/professional practice.

7.1   Where a visa student has started a work placement/internship as part of their programme, their engagement will also be monitored.

7.2   If a student fails to secure a work placement, the Change of Course policy will apply, which requires the student to change to a non-placement version of the course and their visa length will be adjusted accordingly.

7.3   Engagement is monitored jointly by the Employer and the LSBU Employability team and the same rules apply on number of absences and specific absence reasons allowed.as per this policy.

8   Additional expectations for apprenticeships students

8.1   In the event that apprenticeship students are not able to attend university or join a planned face to face or online live session, they are expected to inform their employer in the first instance and contact the university as soon as possible.

8.2   Apprenticeship students must keep their off-the-job record up to date, detailing the hours that they have spent in the off-the-job learning elements within their apprenticeship – noting absences and time spent on rescheduled learning.

8.3   If students are absent for 4 consecutive weeks they will be required to complete a Break in Learning form.

8.4   Each academic year, students must attend at least three Progress Review meetings between the apprentice, the employer and LSBU. Apprenticeship students are required to book their reviews with their Skills Reviewer ensuring the attendance of their line manager. Apprenticeship students must not cancel these reviews on the day unless in exceptional circumstances.

9   Additional expectations for visa sponsored students

9.1   Visa students are required to ensure they attend 100% of their timetabled activity and engage with their course to comply with the requirement of their student visas.

9.2   There is a limited list of authorised absences reasons for visa students. To comply with our Home Office responsibilities, the list is restricted and requires evidential justification. Please see the annexed procedure document to find the full list.

9.3   Excluding holiday periods as outlined in your academic calendar, visa students are not permitted to be outside of the UK for long periods. If you are not engaged in your academic studies for a period of 60 calendar days, under the terms of our sponsor license we are required to report your visa to the Home Office.

10   Additional expectations for students on research programmes

10.1   Research students are not subject to the processes set out in this document relating to taught attendance and engagement. However, the University expects all research students to complete a certain number of hours weekly on their research project to ensure successful outcome and completion of their course.

   7.1.1.1.1   40 hours per week for full-time students

   7.1.1.1.2   20 hours per week for part-time students

10.2   The University expects students to attend all scheduled supervisory meetings and would expect for at least one supervision session to be recorded per month in the appropriate PGR system.

10.3   Further details relating to attendance and engagement for research students can be found in the Supervision Handbook in section 2 (2.2.1). Alternatively, the student should contact their supervisor for more information. (LDA Supervision Handbook_2022 V2.pdf (lsbu.ac.uk)

10.4   Students are expected to attend panel meetings for the academic progression, as they form part of the academic engagement requirements.

11 Procedures and Interventions

11.1   To support student to reduce barriers to engagement and be successful the university has a number of interventions which are used to help support this process.

11.2 All procedures and details of interventions are set out in a separate procedure note, which is annexed to this policy.

11.3 The primary aim is to support student to re-engage, however where this is not possible, the interventions could lead to students having action plans put in place or being asked to interrupt and withdraw from their studies.

12 Use of data

12.1 The University collects data on student attendance and engagement, and use the data:

   12.1.1 internally for reporting, evaluation, learning and training; and

   12.1.2 externally for discussion with regulators in the higher education sector.

12.2 The data used by the University for the purposes set out in paragraphs 12.1 a) and b) will be anonymised. Your personal data and sensitive personal data ('Personal Data') as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 (the "DPA") may be disclosed to the University's members of staff and regulators for the purpose of dealing with your admission and/or enrolment, a complaint arising out of it and/or implementing any recommendations. Personal Data will not be shared with any other third parties unless the University has your express consent, has a statutory obligation to do so, or is otherwise permitted to do so under the DPA.

Appendix 1 – Support Services within LSBU

You are encouraged to seek advice and support regarding this procedure from South Bank Students' Union located in the Student Centre

Student Union's Advice Team: 020 7815 6060 / hello@lsbsu.org
Your Support (southbanksu.com)

Health and Wellbeing Team: 020 7815 6454 / studentwellbeing@lsbu.ac.uk /

Health and wellbeing | London South Bank University (lsbu.ac.uk)

Disability & Dyslexia Support: 020 7815 6454 / disability@lsbu.ac.uk

Student Advice: Money 020 7815 6454 / studentlife@lsbu.ac.uk
Student money advice | London South Bank University (lsbu.ac.uk)

Student Assistance Programme: 0800 028 3766* 24/7

You can also contact these and many other teams via My Account

My Account: http://myaccount.lsbu.ac.uk/s/login/

Support Services: http://myaccount.lsbu.ac.uk/s/my-support

Attendance: http://myaccount.lsbu.ac.uk/s/my-attendance

Extenuating Circumstance: http://myaccount.lsbu.ac.uk/s/extenuating-circumstances

Appendix 2 – CEG Policy

ONCAMPUS Attendance Monitoring Policy

Document Control

Current Version Number	3
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Amendment History

Version No.	Date	Summary of Amendment	Author
3	September 2023	Clarification of wording in most areas	CH

Document Reviewers

Name	Role	Policy Responsibility
ONCAMPUS Operations Team		Consulted
M Goodwin	Group Chief Operating Officer	Accountable

Relevant Documents

Policy
Related CEG team member policies can be found at the CEG Help Centre including: • Health and Safety Policy and Procedures 2015 • CEG Disciplinary Policy • CEG Equality & Diversity Policy • CEG Dignity at Work Policy • CEG Prevent Duty Policy • CEG Privacy Policy (https://www.cambridgeeducationgroup.com/privacy-policy.htm)
Legislation and Government Guidance

Approved by:	Signature	Date
Mike Goodwin		**21/9/23**

Contents

1. ONCAMPUS Commitment

Student attendance and engagement is vital to student success and to provide a positive learning experience and to maximise the potential for academic success through engagement with the programme of study. **ON**CAMPUS expects all students to engage with their programme of study on a regular basis and for missed learning to be at minimal levels throughout the duration of sponsorship. For the avoidance of doubt, **ON**CAMPUS expects all students to prioritise attendance and engagement with their programme ahead of all other activities – e.g. social activities or work which should be organised outside of scheduled learning. **ON**CAMPUS reserves the right to take action at any time, including but not limited to, withdrawing students from programmes of study if acceptable levels of attendance are not maintained.

ONCAMPUS will comply with all aspects of UKVI Immigration Rules and sponsor guidance, and is committed to fulfilling our sponsor duties to ensure that the system is not abused. **ON**CAMPUS will ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of all students it sponsors.

For the avoidance of doubt, for centres outside the UK if local immigration policy dictates a higher level of attendance than stipulated in this policy, local requirements take precedence. In all other circumstances, this policy will be applied.

2. Attendance Monitoring Process

Students who study with **ON**CAMPUS (including those sponsored via a partner University on an iCAS programme) will be subject to this attendance monitoring policy. These are minimum expectations.

Where a student's attendance falls below **70% for three consecutive months**, the student will be withdrawn from their programme of study and sponsorship will be removed unless there is exceptional and evidenced reasons for the non-attendance (e.g., illness).

Where a student has not reached **85% attendance of their classroom-based study in a month**, the centre must review the reason for the student's absence and put enhanced monitoring in place. The student's record will be annotated with the reason for the non-attendance and the steps being taken to improve the student's attendance recorded.

Students who miss 5 consecutive days of class will be contacted to establish the reason for absence and to check on their wellbeing. Where contact is not established with the student within 48 hrs of the fifth day of absence, the case will be escalated to the Centre Director. Students under the age of 18 who miss a class without prior approval will be contacted on the same day to discuss their reasons for non- attendance in line with **ON**CAMPUS policy on protecting under 18 year olds.

It is expected that centres will be monitoring and acting on emerging attendance concerns as soon as delivery begins and should not wait until the first formal attendance review to raise concerns with students.

Centres are required to provide data on student attendance on a monthly basis. This must include reports on students who have not achieved 85% attendance on the programme in the previous period. Where students are sponsored through a university partner integrated CAS (ICAS) model, this data must also be shared with the university.

In order to withdraw a student from a programme of studies, centres must put forward a withdrawal request providing all relevant evidence. Withdrawal requests will be reviewed by a panel. Information on extenuating circumstances should be provided at this stage.

Each panel will consist of a minimum of 2 managers from central support functions in **ON**CAMPUS and will be chaired by one of the following:

- Director of Global Study Centres
- Deputy Director of Global Study Centres
- Director of Safeguarding and Wellbeing
- Head of UKVI Compliance

There will also be representation from University partner for students enrolled through ICAS.

All communication with students related to attendance management will be recorded on the learner's record. Reasons for poor attendance must be recorded on the learner's record.

Where there are concerns over a student's attendance the centre will engage the student on an attendance improvement plan. Where attendance does not improve students are at risk of withdrawal from study. When such withdrawal is due to take place students will be issued with a final written warning followed by a notice of withdrawal letter and, finally, confirmation of withdrawal.

- Attendance below 85% in any given month = note of concern and action plan
- Below 70% in any given month = written warning and action plan
- Below 70% in two given months = final written warning and action plan
- Below 70% in three given months = notice of withdrawal and action plan

NOTE: Any student who has attendance below 70% for 3 consecutive months will be in breach of UKVI guidance and will have their sponsorship terminated. Outside the UK, relevant national rules will apply.

NOTE: Any student who has attendance below 85% in any given month must be issued with a note of concern and an action plan. Reasons for low attendance must be recorded on the student record. This process must be repeated in every month that attendance falls below 85%.

Centres may put forward recommendations for withdrawal, supported by evidence such as multiple notes of concern, in cases of poor engagement.

3. Communication Touch Points

Registers of attendance for taught sessions are the primary method of monitoring attendance and engagement. However, other engagement may be considered in some circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Attending scheduled sessions with their Personal Tutor
- Submission of assessments and attending examinations
- Engagement with VLE

4. Authorised/Unauthorised Absence Requests

Students may request short term authorised absence requests. All absence requests will be considered on an individual basis and evidence will be required to ensure a consistent and fair approach.

A student can submit a short term absence request **for no more than 5 days**. All absence requests

should be submitted a minimum of 10 days in advance of the absence, to be considered. The nominated person within the centre should consider the grounds on which the request is made, the length of time requested and the impact of the absence on the student's academic studies.

Authorised absence definitions: In all cases evidence for the absence is required
    i.   Illness e.g., medical certificate, doctors' note.
   ii.   Attendance at appointments/commitments considered inflexible e.g., hospital appointments, religious requirements, court attendance.
  iii.   Mitigating circumstances e.g., bereavements, serious illness of a close family member, childcare, technical issues related to online study.

If the absence request does not meet the grounds for approval and is rejected, the student must be informed within 48 hours of submitting the request and the reason for the rejection will be provided.

5.   Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive on time to facilitate a punctual start. If a student arrives late for class they will be marked as late. If a student arrives after 50% of their lesson has been delivered, they will be marked absent unless they can provide evidence of an exceptional reason that fits within the authorised absence definitions. Persistent lateness will be followed up by a notice of concern, student conduct/disciplinary policy. These should be record on the student record. In the most severe cases, persistent lateness could lead to withdrawal.

6.   Registers

Tutors will mark the register at the start of the class. Each centre will conduct regular checks to ensure registers are completed accurately and in accordance with policy. The Centre Director and other relevant staff will be alerted if registers are not completed accurately and on time.

7.   Storing Sensitive Student Documentation

All student documents i.e., medical certificates, death certificates, medical appointments must be uploaded against the learner record on Ontrack. Student documents should NOT be stored elsewhere.

8.   Communication

In order to ensure that students are fully supported and that **ON**CAMPUS provides a high level of service and engagement with stakeholders, clear and timely communication with relevant organisations is crucial, subject to appropriate data protection legislation and agreements. These organisations include, but are not limited to:

- Parents
- Guardianship service providers
- Financial sponsors
- Partner universities
- Educational agents
- Internal stakeholders such as student recruitment team

9.   Appeals

An appeal process is available to students at Notice of Withdrawal stage

Monitoring under 18 years and vulnerable adults

Students under the age of 18 or identified as a vulnerable adult who do not arrive for class, must be reported to the Attendance Officer <u>15 minutes</u> after the class start time.

There is a requirement for students under the age of 18 to check-in with the centre on a daily basis. Local protocol will be communicated to students as to how to do this.

If the student has not checked in and/or is not in class within the first 15 minutes of the class start time, the Attendance Officer/team member will attempt to contact the student by all means to confirm their whereabouts, understand their reasons for missing class and to ensure they are safe and well.

If the centre is unable to contact the student before the close of the same day the case must be escalated to the Centre Director who will update relevant staff. He/she will determine at what point to contact the parents/guardians and if a Police report needs to be filed; this will usually be following a period of several hours, whereby all reasonable avenues to make contact with the student have been explored.

When contact has been made with the student, the Centre Director will provide a further update to relevant staff and parent(s)/guardian(s) to de-escalate the case.

ONCAMPUS has a responsibility towards all its students and this is also applicable to any student deemed to be vulnerable.